

Crossroads

www.lajes.af.mil



Vol. 17, No. 9 March 2, 2012

Lajes Field, Azores, Portugal

Force Protection



Current FPCON: Alpha
Threat Level: Low

**"6-5...
IN THE FIGHT!"
FY 2012**

**466
SORTIES**

**8,012
LODGED**

**2,4 M
gallons
FUEL ISSUED**

In a real-world
emergency, call the
Public Affairs Straight
Talk Line, **535-3542**.

Don't drink and drive; call
LADD: 295 57 LADD

Medical Appointment:

Base: 535-3261

Off base: 295-573-261

Emergency:

Base: 911

Off base: 295-571-911

Weekend Weather Forecast

(21st Operational Weather
Squadron)

Saturday (a.m. / p.m.)

Mostly Cloudy / Partly Cloudy

Wind SW 15 / 25 mph

SW 25 / 35 mph

HIGH 19C / 66F

LOW 13C / 55F

Sunday (a.m. / p.m.)

Mostly Cloudy / Partly Cloudy

Wind SW 25 / 35 mph

NW 20 / 30 mph

HIGH 18C / 64F

LOW 14C / 57F

Terceira native becomes Lajes Political Affairs officer



Capt. Rui Amaral, 65th Air Base Wing Political Affairs officer, in his office, Feb. 24, 2012. Amaral, originally from Santa Luzia, is the first Terceira native to hold this position. (Photo by Lucas Silva)

By 1st Lt. Mara Title

65th Air Base Wing Public Affairs

"Measures impact of local, regional, national and global issues on mission; vital liaison to Portuguese Air Force leadership." This statement was taken from part of the job description for a 65th Air Base Wing Political Affairs officer at Lajes Field. Since 1946, this position has helped U.S. Air Force leadership foster extremely important ties with our Portuguese allies, enabling incredible beddown support for aircraft from around the globe. But for the first time in 66 years, the position is being held by a Terceira native, who dreamed as a boy of one day joining the world's greatest Air Force.

Capt. Rui Amaral, 65th Communications Squadron, lived in the area of Santa Luzia, and frequently came to Lajes Field as a boy with his father.

"My father was a car washer on base and always invited American friends over for dinner," said Amaral.

"Most of my friends as a child were dependents of American military members stationed at Lajes."

At the time, T.V. was broadcasted over the airways rather than satellite, said Amaral, so he got a healthy dose of "Sesame Street" and "Electric Company". With all of the interaction he had with American life, he started considering the Air Force as a career.

"I heard once in high school that a high school student would be 70 percent more successful if he or she had some sort of notion of what to do after graduation, compared to those who didn't," said Amaral. "I thought to myself, 'Wow, I'm ahead of the ball game' because, I'd wanted to join the Air Force since I was 13 years old."

With social and monetary struggles in the Azores, Amaral was motivated to find a better life. Coming from a close-knit family, his parents were hesitant to let him go to the states on his own.

To read more on "Political Affairs" see page 4



Supporting those who support us

By Master Sgt. Greg Lee
65th Medical Support
Squadron superintendent



With the Air Force Assistance Fund kick-off upon us, it's important that we all realize why this organization deserves our support. The AFAF is an organization that gives back to all of us, and provides so much assistance to Airmen in need. From the Air Force Enlisted Village to the Lemay Foundation, the AFAF is in the business of taking care of Air Force members and their families, especially when they can't take care of themselves. In our own community they offer programs such as Bundles for Babies and Give Parents A Break, which are set up to help Air Force families relieve some of the stress and anxiety that can come with being a parent in a demanding world.

I myself used one of the AFAF programs many years ago—the Air Force Aid Society. I was a young airman first class with a wife, a two-year-old daughter and a baby on the way when the engine on my vehicle gave out. With my family and I doing everything we could to get by, there was no way I could afford a \$1,200 repair

bill, and without my car I couldn't get to work. This was causing a lot of pain and nervousness for me and I didn't know what to do next. That was, until my first sergeant took me to apply for an Air Force Aid Society loan. They gave me a \$1,200 check on the spot, and I was able to pay back the interest free loan in just one year, with very little pain to my monthly budget. I will never forget the feeling of receiving that check; it meant so much to my family and I, and more importantly, got me back on the road.

However, my story is just one example of what the Air Force Assistance Fund does every day. So even though you may not have ever used their services personally, you should be aware of their importance to the Air Force as a whole.

I have seen many years in the Air Force since I needed their help, but I've made it a point to give back to the AFAF every year since that day. So while we are enjoying the celebration that marks the beginning of the AFAF season, take time to think about those who need help and remember this when you give. Just because we serve together in the greatest Air Force in the world, it doesn't mean that we all can't use a little bit of help every now and then.

Commander's Action Line
535-4240
65abw.actionline@lajes.af.mil

The Commander's Action Line is your link to the commander for suggestions, kudos and as a way to work problems or issues within the 65th Air Base Wing for which you can't find another solution.

Your chain of command should always be your first option — but when that's not the answer, call or e-mail the Commander's Action Line at 535-4240 or 65abw.actionline@lajes.af.mil.



Col. Jose Rivera
Commander, 65th Air Base Wing

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Commander, 65th Air Base Wing

Take money matters into own hands with TSP

By 2nd Lt. Rebecca Hernandez
65th Force Support Squadron

Last week, Lajes Field saw huge success in savings with the events of Military Saves Week. With the goal of encouraging servicemembers to make the pledge to be financially secure, one airman accepted the challenge while another shared her experiences of financial success. Being one of the Air Force's newest airmen, Airman 1st Class Corey Legister decided to start saving early in his career and invest in the Thrift Savings Plan.

Although skeptical about the TSP at first, Legister met with a financial counselor at the Airman and Family Readiness Center to get all the facts, and got started on his path to financial success. As Legister made the commitment to pay himself first and invest in his future, he emulated Tech. Sgt. Kimberly Young's experience from nearly 12 years ago, as she too opened her TSP account here at Lajes Field as an airman first class.

When the TSP program was first introduced to the Air Force, Young attended a TSP kick-off workshop, where she was first educated on the ins and outs of TSP. She liked what she heard and the rest, as she says, "is history".

Legister's financial mentor is his father, a retired master sergeant, who shared his

wisdom with him by teaching him to "put aside satisfactions of today so you can live a better tomorrow". Young's motivation to start a TSP was to be able to retire from the Air Force with the option of not having to start a second career.

Goal setting is the first step to creating a financially sound plan. A financially secure retirement is the objective for both airmen when it comes to investing in the TSP. Both set their aspirations high and although Young still has many years to go until retirement, she can already see the fruits of her commitment to TSP, as she claims, "I could purchase a brand new car, if I wanted to—paid in full."

Currently, only 33 percent of uniformed service members are actively participating in TSP. The plan is one of the single most easy and effective means of saving for retirement for our servicemembers. Airmen can get started today directly through the MyPay website. For more information and advice on TSP, contact your A&FRC or visit TSP.gov. Young's advice to all airmen... "Take your financial matters into your own hands. Unfortunately, many of us are not taught the beauty of savings, so when retirement or even an emergency comes, we are stuck at a stand-still. We need to educate our young Airmen early and ping our 'older' Airmen now to start investing in their own futures. The key is to start!"



The 65th Air Base Wing Public Affairs staff prepares all editorial content in the Crossroads.

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FY2013 budget cuts to impact U.S. Air Forces in Europe

By U.S. Air Forces in Europe
Public Affairs

The Air Force released its fiscal 2013 budget Feb. 13 and stressed the need for difficult budgetary cuts to meet the new defense strategy while maintaining the service's agility, flexibility and readiness. These cuts include several impacts to force structure in Europe.

The Air Force is requesting \$154.3 billion in the president's 2013 budget, a reduction of five percent from the \$162.5 billion the service received in fiscal 2012. The impact of this reduction to U.S. Air Forces in Europe will include the inactivation of the 81st Fighter Squadron at Spangdahlem Air Base and the retirement of its 20 A-10 fighter aircraft. The Air Control Squadron at Aviano Air Base in Italy will also inactivate. More details on Air Force wide force structure changes and the impact to personnel will be announced in March. Both units will inactivate by the end of Fiscal Year 2013.

According to officials at U.S. European Command, the United States has an enduring interest in supporting peace, prosperity, unity and freedom in Europe, as well as bolstering the strength and vitality of NATO. Despite the announced force structure changes, the U.S. will maintain a robust military presence in Europe.

Budget reductions affect the entire Department of Defense and according to Maj. Gen. Edward L. Bolton Jr., the deputy assistant secretary for budget,

"The Air Force made some very difficult choices. But it was our priority to tightly align with the new strategy and also stay within the fiscal environment as a result of the realities we are facing economically."

The Air Force Strategic Choices and Budget Priorities paper, released by Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz on Jan. 27, calls for streamlining of the force, making it smaller and more efficient with care to not create a hollow force.

While the Air Force is working to adjust to a new strategic environment, the Commander of U.S. Air Forces in Europe emphasized the continuing importance of USAFE's forward presence.

"Despite the changes to our force structure and budget, close cooperation with Europe remains key to our national security strategy, and USAFE is a major part of that," said Gen. Mark A. Welsh III. "We are strategically located and provide critical capabilities to NATO, EUCOM, AFRICOM and CENTCOM. From mobility, to communications, to logistics, to command and control, to contingency response ... USAFE remains vital."

Under the Budget Control Act, the Department of Defense is required to reduce expenditures by \$487 billion over the next 10 years with a reduction of \$259 billion over the next five.

"It is worth noting that our budget has reduced by 12 percent in real terms since FY09," Bolton said. "So we have seen a consistent trend of reductions in the budget."

"The Air Force budget portion of the Budget Control Act reductions over the next five years is \$54 billion," Bolton said.

The Air Force's portion is not a result of simply dividing responsibility between the services. Instead, the budget amount is strategy driven, while maintaining a properly equipped force with the ability to deter, deny and defeat an opportunistic aggressor in a combined campaign anytime, anywhere, he added.

"The strategy requires a different force structure and different tools; the Air Force is realigning the total force to address the future," Bolton said.

The service has drawn down many times in the past, but never as a nation still at war. Previous size reductions focused more on maintaining force structure, which left the Air Force with a hollow force, he said.

"It is really about balancing risk among the themes of force structure, readiness, modernization and taking care of our people," Bolton said. "We have sized the force to the strategy within the fiscal constraints we are facing."

The Air Force is looking at a nearly \$3 billion reduction in procurement cost because the service divested and is purchasing less hardware. Also, there is a reduction of about \$500 million in research, development, testing and evaluation, but the Air Force continued its focus on modernizing key components that will maintain the service's technological edge, Bolton said.

"Funding for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance and space remain a priority," he added. "We will continue to develop programs in ISR ensuring we are supplying this skill set to the joint warfighter and coalition partners."

According to Bolton, funding also remains in place for the F-35 Lightning II joint strike fighter -- the centerpiece for future modernization to be able to prevail in contested environments.

"Ensuring fiscal goals are met and fleet modernization continues are only half of the goal in the new strategy," said Bolton. "Taking care of Airmen and their families is a key component and

cannot get lost in talking of mere numbers.

"We are reducing the force by 9,900 Airmen, which will reduce the end strength of active duty, Guard and Reserve to around a 501,000 total force," he said. "This allows us to appropriately size the force structure to the strategy and hardware we are going to have in the inventory."

The Air Force is proposing a 1.7 percent military pay raise in fiscal 2013 and a 4.2 percent raise in basic allowance for housing and 3.4 percent raise in the basic allowance for subsistence as a continuing growth of compensation for service.

"We are budgeting more than \$700 million for family programs including child and youth programs and child development centers," Bolton said. "We will continue to take care of our folks; we just need to ensure it is being done efficiently under tighter fiscal constraints."

Housing is a key ingredient to taking care of Airmen and the Air Force is close to reaching its goal of 53,000 privatized housing units force-wide with over 40,000 units in place and the remaining units to be ready in fiscal 2013.

"We've increased our family housing budget by \$93 million and this will allow us to meet our goal," Bolton said. "Completing this transition is important because we have found through privatization we are able to increase the quality of housing for our Airmen and their families."

Looking back to the 2011 requirements -- military action and support in Iraq and Afghanistan, supporting NATO missions in Libya, along with humanitarian support to Japan following a major earthquake -- Bolton reinforced the reach and responsibility placed on today's Airmen and emphasized the importance of providing them the tools required for a versatile force.

"We will continue to do everything we can to provide them with the tools they need to continue to be the best Air Force in the world for decades to come," Bolton said.

Editor's note: The U.S. Air Force Public Affairs Agency, USAFE Public Affairs and EUCOM Public Affairs contributed to this story.





"Political Affairs" from page 1

"But they believed in me," said Amaral, "So they opened the door to my life by letting me step onto that plane and chase my dreams."

The youngest of five, Amaral left his two sisters, two brothers, and parents behind and set off to complete three more years of high school in the states while he lived with different relatives.

Once finished, he went to the Military Entrance Processing Station in Butte, Mont. But according to Amaral, with only a green card, he was very limited on job options, because he didn't have a clearance. Nevertheless, as an Airman Basic he reached his first base, Whiteman AFB, in mid-1993, "Which was the home of the—at that time—brand new B-2 Stealth Bomber," said Amaral.

It took him three years just to apply for U.S. citizenship; in the meantime, he volunteered for a deployment to Saudi Arabia. After he received his citizenship paperwork in the Air Force Personnel System, he received orders to Misawa Air Base, Japan, to work in intelligence.

"Suddenly, my security clearance went from nothing to Top Secret," he said.

However, not long after, he was faced with terrible news.

"My flight commander notified me that my father had passed away," said Amaral. "That was probably the most devastating and unexpected piece of information I've ever received."

But his father's passing caused him to re-think his priorities in life.

"I had let seven years of my military career go by, and lost focus of what I really wanted, which was to become an officer and have my father pin on my bars," said Amaral.

Amaral was then assigned to Lackland Air Force Base, and started working on a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science. According to Amaral, he gave himself an ultimatum...if he didn't get accepted to Officer Training School, he would separate from the Air Force. During this time, he also met his wife, Aurora.

Although he did get selected and commissioned from OTS, the accomplishment was bittersweet.

"I took the second lieutenant bars pinned on by my mother and wife and placed them on my father's grave stone," he said. "So my father taught me an important lesson in life even after he passed away—don't procrastinate on your dreams or have fear of them—if it's meant to be, it will happen."

After commissioning, Amaral completed his master's degree while he worked as a communications officer at Shaw Air Force Base, and during a deployment to Qatar. According to Amaral, just five days after he graduated from school, he received "a curious e-mail from

the Air Force Academy, stating they needed Portuguese instructors, and I'd been identified as speaking the language."

Now that he'd gotten his master's degree, he was eligible for the teaching position.

"I was curious and called," said Amaral. "They did a courtesy interview with me and after that did a by-name pull to the Academy."

He taught for three years as an "Assistant Professor of Portuguese/Spanish". He was able to visit Brazil, Portugal and Cabo Verde with the cadets, which he said was also a learning experience for him. Following his assignment at the Academy, after 18 years of trying, he finally got his wish of getting orders to Lajes Field.

He initially filled the position of flight commander at the 65th Communications Squadron, but not too long after, was chosen to work in the Political Affairs office. He's come a long way to get where he is, but he's stronger because of the journey.

"I've had folks discourage me from trying to better my life—people tried to say I wasn't good enough," said Amaral. "I would take it as a personal challenge, and the next day I would double my efforts to succeed. It always helps to have a family that believes in you and supports you as well," he said.

Amaral's sister also served in the Air Force, and separated as a senior airman. All of the males in his family served in the Portuguese Army.

His life experiences as an enlisted member and officer, as well as Portuguese local national, have prepared him well for his present position.

"Having a family that had such interaction with the base and living amongst the community makes for a great cultural background," said Amaral. "I still have folks come to me and tell me they remember me as a child."

He also had some interaction with the Portuguese air force when he taught at the Air Force Academy, which he says gave him some insight on how it works.

Although Amaral is content with his life right now, he remains humble, with an infectious can-do attitude.

"If a kid from an island roughly 18 by 10.8 miles long in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean can immigrate to the states, serve in the greatest Air Force in the world, find his soul mate, get commissioned and 18 years later return to his hometown and serve as a Political Affairs Officer, then I'm willing to bet you can reach your goals, too."

So 27 years after he told himself he wanted to join the U.S. Air Force, he's living the dream.

LAJES WARRIORS OF THE WEEK



Name: Arnaldo Candido

Rank: WG-11

Unit: 65th CS

Hometown: Lajes, Terceira Island

Duty Title: Head Switch Operator

Accomplishments: Sr. Arnaldo Candido is responsible for providing new installations and maintenance on the \$7 million base telephone switching system and acts as the go-between for military telephone personnel and Portuguese Telecom. He works

hand-in-hand with contractors on jobs that involve circuits that pass through the switch or throughout the base telephone infrastructure, to include alarm circuits, primary and secondary crash circuits, and hotlines. His efforts were never more evident than in the repair of 10 alarm circuits for the Medical Group. Candido ensured the circuits were temperature-alert capable, helping to protect \$23,000 in base vaccines and medications.



Name: Quinan Born

Rank: Airman 1st Class

Unit: 65th CS

Hometown: Sherwood, Ore.

Duty Title: Knowledge Operations Management Apprentice

Accomplishments: Airman 1st Class Born joined the Air Force in August 2011 and arrived at Lajes in December 2011. He was eager to enroll in his CDCs and has completed 52 percent of his on-the-job training tasks.

He serves as Lajes' primary Air Force Portal manager, overseeing 12 content managers supporting over 350,000 users. He also serves as the assistant manager for all SharePoint pages on base supporting 2,100 users. Born interacts with local nationals and Airmen outside of his unit on a daily basis as the LRS Functional Area Records Manager. He has been recognized as a hard-charger; his goal is to become a commissioned officer within the next few years.



"6-5...IN THE FIGHT!"

Feature



The Terceira and Santa Luzia Girl Scouts earned the Lady Baden Powell Award, which exemplifies International Friendship, at the Lajes Field Chapel, Feb. 26, 2012. The girls had to attend five scout activities, centering around communication, community, camping, crafts, and culture, to earn the award. (Photo by Lucas Silva)



Nathan Quick, son of Master Sgt. Ronald Quick, 65th Civil Engineer Squadron, participated in the Pepsi Regional Qualifier Tournament in Vogelweh, Germany, as part of the Lajes Youth League, Feb. 11, 2012. He earned 12th place out of 45 bowlers, earning him \$157.53 in Scholarship Management and Accounting Reports for Tenpins scholarship money. (Courtesy Photo)



More than 150 Team Lajes members participated in a 5K run hosted by the African American Heritage Council to celebrate health and fitness during African American Black History Month at Lajes Field, Azores, Feb. 24. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Chyrece Campbell)

**2011
USAFE
AWARD
WINNER**

**65th
Civil
Engineer
Squadron**



At a wing staff meeting, (right) Col. Dave Parr, 65th Air Base Wing vice commander, coins (left) Leland Livingston, 65th Civil Engineer Squadron, for earning USAFE's Society of American Indian Government Employee Meritorious Service Award, Feb. 21, 2012. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Chyrece Campbell)



Mark your calendar

GIRL SCOUTS VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY:

Do you want to volunteer for Girl Scouts, but think it takes too much time? Think again! Is your specialty decorating or hosting events, mathematics or science, cooking or sports? Do you have fun ideas and no place to share them? Then the Events Pathways volunteer position is for you! Pathways are six different ways girls and adults can participate in Girl Scouts--camp, troop, events, series, travel, and virtual. If being a troop leader doesn't fit your schedule, then consider just planning 1-2 events per year as an Events Pathways volunteer. You will have plenty of support, so don't worry, you are not alone. There is great local support with the Girl Scouts in your community. Interested? Contact your local Overseas Committee at: april.legere@gmail.com.



2012 AIR FORCE ASSISTANCE FUND KICK-OFF EVENT: The AFAF drive is from March 5 to Apr 13. There will be a kick-off event at the Café Bean March 2 from 7-9 a.m. Come out and join us for a cup of coffee and music by the "Island Bombs". There will also be an AFAF raffle for up to \$50 in FSS gift cards, and sign-ups for OSS' Mustache March Madness. Please contact Capt. Steven Mackinder, 535-1362, or Master Sgt. Mike Tryner, 535-5122 for questions.

WOMEN'S NUTRITION CLASS/COOKING DEMO: March is Women's History month. There will be a Women's Nutrition Class/ Cooking Demo on March 6, at noon. Please RSVP by March 1 to andreea.antonesei@lajes.af.mil Space is limited.

FLEA MARKET: Due to the youth basketball season, there will be no Flea Market in March. The next one is Apr. 21.



Feature

Phrase of the Week A LESSON IN PORTUGUESE



ENGLISH: Where is the bathroom?

PORTUGUESE: Onde fica a casa de banho?

PRONUNCIATION: Un-day feeeka ah kah-za day ban-ho?



Military Spouse Tuition Assistance Changes

The Air Force Aid society will discontinue the Spouse Tuition Assistance Program for overseas military spouses on July 31, 2012.

However, AFAS will immediately expand eligibility requirements of the Hap Arnold Education Grant Program to overseas military spouses.

The Arnold Grant Program is an annual needs-based \$2,000 education grant designed to assist military spouses with undergraduate degree education costs.

AFAS has extended the application deadline for the 2012-2013 Academic Year to March 30, 2012, for OCONUS spouses only.

You may access the Arnold Grant Program information and application by visiting:

<http://www.afas.org/Education/ArnoldEdGrant.cfm>

For additional information, please contact the Airman and Family Readiness Center at 535-4138.

ASK ED

A column that looks at the culture and history of the Azores.

By Eduardo Lima

Community Relations Advisor



Question:

Do the U.S. military, civilians, dependents and retired personnel who own Portuguese POVs with Portuguese license plates need to pay Portuguese road taxes while stationed or living here?

Answer:

According to the Portuguese law and U.S. Security Forces' local regulations, Americans who own a vehicle purchased on the local economy, which keeps the Portuguese license plate, are required to pay local road taxes annually.

Individuals in this situation need to go to the Portuguese Finance Office located at 21-A, Avenida Paço do Milhafre in Praia da Vitoria and pay the referred road tax. The tax payers will need to take the vehicle registration and specifications document (it is green and titled "Livrete or Documento Único Automóvel"), and the Portuguese fiscal number in order to fill out the necessary paperwork.

Once they fill out the tax form with the vehicle specifications and pay the road tax, they will be given a receipt, which should be kept in the vehicle at all times in case the person driving the vehicle is stopped by the Portuguese police and asked to produce proof the road tax has been paid.

The road tax amount varies with the age of the car, power of the engine (number of cylinders), type of fuel used, etc.

This annual tax should be paid during the month the vehicle was initially purchased and registered. This information can be found in the "Livrete" or "Documento Único Automóvel." Failure to pay within the stipulated month will result in a 15.00 Euro fine, which will be paid in conjunction with the road tax.